DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 402 978 JC 970 048

AUTHOR Puyear, Don
TITLE Arizona Community Colleges in 2010.
PUB DATE Jan 97
NOTE 6p.
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *College Planning; College Role; *Community Colleges; *Curriculum Development; *Educational Finance; *Futures (of Society); Graduation Requirements; Long Range Planning; *Student Personnel Services; Trend Analysis; Two Year Colleges
IDENTIFIERS Arizona

ABSTRACT

Although community colleges both in Arizona and throughout the United States are well-placed for the future, serious challenges do exist. Property taxes, the primary vehicle for funding in Arizona, face an uncertain future, while the advent of the Internet and the imminent availability of interactive cable television raise questions about how learning will be delivered in the future. These and other forces suggest that community colleges will be called on to adapt considerably by the year 2010. The colleges will most likely be called upon to perform additional services and provide a much wider array of instructional services to students as the percentage of students receiving instruction and services via nontraditional means will increase significantly. In addition, cooperation with universities will have increased to the point that colleges will be offering baccalaureate degrees, including a Bachelor of Applied Technology degree, as part of their regular offerings. Changes can also be expected with respect to graduation requirements, with the achievement of specified competencies replacing the completion of specific semester hours, and funding mechanisms, with formulas shifting from enrollment-based to performance-based models. To plan for these changes, colleges should differentiate between faculty roles as designers, deliverers, or mentors; expand the role of student services; and increase communication technology to meet future distance learning needs. (HAA)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 402 978

Arizona Community Colleges in 2010

by
Don Puyear

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

D. E. Puyear

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

JC 970 048

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Arizona Community Colleges in 2010

The following comments are intended to provide a vision of what community colleges in Arizona—and in much of the rest of the country—may look like in 2010, a mere 13 years from now. These observations are mine alone and do not represent the views or position of the State Board of Directors for Community Colleges of Arizona or any other group or individual. They are based on the results of a Charrette held last September by the Committee on the Future of Arizona Community Colleges, on reading and conversations related to the work of Arizona Learning Systems, and on general observations of the directions community colleges are taking. The comments are intended to stimulate a lively discussion of the directions community colleges should take and, perhaps, create an understanding of the forces that may help shape the future mission of the colleges.

— Don Puyear, January 1997.

Community colleges are facing an exciting future. The President of the United States has made them a centerpiece of his educational initiative. In Arizona, community colleges have successfully negotiated a watershed agreement with the State's public universities regarding transfer articulation. They are providing outstanding leadership in preparing the State for distance education and, in the process, demonstrating that they can be a strong unifying force since they are situated to effectively communicate and collaborate with a wide array of public and private entities.

But there are also serious challenges. Property taxes—the primary vehicle for funding community colleges in Arizona—face an uncertain future. The advent of the Internet and the imminent availability of interactive cable television in the metropolitan areas of the state, along with such governmental innovations as the Western Governors' University, raise interesting questions about how learning will be delivered in the future. This will be particularly critical in learning for adult job enhancement and career development—a major element of the community college mission. These forces, and others we will discuss below, suggest that community colleges will be called on to adapt and change.

Some observations and projections:

- For all the talk of change, community colleges in 2010 will look a lot as they do now. The differences will be more in the additional services they perform, and in a much wider array of instructional opportunities that will be available to students.
- For most community colleges, regular classroom instruction and regular terms of instruction will still be the norm, but the percentage of students receiving instruction and services by other means will have increased very significantly. Most colleges will operate on a year-round calendar with a "Summer Semester" becoming increasingly common. Some colleges, such as Rio Salado College and the Community Campus at Pima Community College, will operate entirely on a continuous calendar with students able to begin a new course module virtually at any time. Most of the other community colleges will have one or more organizational units that operate on such a continuous calendar.

- Community college collaboration with public universities will have increased to the point where it will be possible to earn a moderately broad array of baccalaureate degrees at most community colleges not located in the same community as one of the universities. This collaboration will have taken various forms, but in each case the baccalaureate degree will be awarded by the university, while a significant part of the instruction will have been provided by faculty who also teach at the community college.
- Several, but not all, community colleges will be offering a Bachelor of Applied Technology degree as part of their regular offerings. These degrees will be in occupational fields and will not replicate degrees offered by any of the universities.
- Enrollment patterns will have changed to the point where a majority of students will attend community colleges for the first two years of their baccalaureate programs and a very significant percentage of those seeking baccalaureate programs will do so in their home communities in conjunction with the local community college.
- The number and variety of providers of instruction will have dramatically increased. In addition to regular classroom instruction, students will be able to receive instruction from a number of colleges, both public and private, and from commercial providers, in their homes via cable television (course on demand) or computer—several options, including the World Wide Web and CD-ROM, which will have greatly-increased capacity, and a variety of mixed-media options.
- Interactive instructional television (IITV) will remain an essential tool for extending the classroom, particularly in the rural districts and in the large rural areas of the metropolitan districts. As a vehicle for reaching special populations and individual learners, however, it will have been largely replaced by the variety of non-synchronous instructional offerings described previously.
- Carnegie units (Semester hours) will still be in use but competencies will have been defined for virtually all basic skills and occupational courses. The criteria for graduation from occupational programs, and for significant blocks within the baccalaureate parallel curriculums, will be stated in terms of the achievement of competencies rather in terms of semester hours completed.
- The standard instructional unit will have moved from the 3-semester hour course to much smaller modules, each of which will focus on the development of a fairly compact set of competencies. Where they still apply, most "regular courses" will be defined by the list of modules that must have been mastered. A student's course of study will be planned to enable the student to develop competencies required to complete his or her learning objectives, which may or may not include receipt of a credential, such as a degree or certificate.
- The average age of community college students will continue to increase, and the average course load will continue to decrease as more older, part-time students attend the community college to take a single module at a time as required by their jobs or by their personal desires.
- Community college student services will have changed and expanded in scope. Students will increasingly use community colleges as the place where they coordinate and receive

credentials for their learning, which will have come from a variety of sources, in addition to the community college. Community college student services mentors will assist students to design learning plans to achieve their individual objectives using the wide variety of learning resources available. Community college instruction will be complemented by the other available resources to develop an individual learning plan.

- The basis for State support for community colleges will have shifted from an enrollment-driven paradigm to a model that includes a major component based on the accomplishment of pre-defined priorities and the contribution of community colleges to the economic and social health of Arizona. Enrollment (FTSE) will be supplemented by such criteria as (for occupational programs) number of students placed and retained in employment related to the program of instruction and (for transfer students) the number of students transferring to a university and being retained there for at least one year. The development of these criteria will be the subject of ongoing debates with a tug and pull between simplicity and ease of application, on one hand, and the desire to be accurate and relevant, on the other. These issues will not have been fully resolved in 2010.
- If the taxpayer revolt against property taxes has not eliminated them altogether (which does not seem likely in Arizona), reliance on local property taxes will have been found to be an unconstitutionally inequitable method of funding public schools, and this will have prompted a major debate on how public schools should be funded. This debate will have spilled over into community college funding, and a study begun by Arizona community colleges in 1996 will have provided a solid basis for proposing alternatives for community colleges.
- State aid will continue to provide only a fraction of total income. Students and employers will be called upon to pay a significantly larger proportion of instructional expenses.
- Colleges will become more entrepreneurial in the selection and presentation of programs. Tuition and fees will be affected by market forces and will vary among the offerings of each college.

Implications for Planning:

If these observations are accurate, then community colleges will need to plan for some significant changes in their organizations and facilities. The following come to mind:

- Faculty roles will increasingly differentiate between (1) a relatively few faculty who are primarily designers of learning experiences, (2) those who primarily deliver course content, and (3) the majority of faculty who are more properly described as a counselor-mentor-coach. The qualifications required for each of these roles need to be more precisely defined and a compensation structure developed to appropriately reward those who excel in each of these essential roles.
- The role of students services must expand and become more integrated into the fabric of the college. The distinction between student services and instruction will blur as, for many

programs, the dominant faculty role changes from dispensers of knowledge to that of counselor-mentor-coach, noted above.

- Community colleges must increase their capabilities in defining and reporting their contributions to the community. Institutional effectiveness measures will be an increasingly important basis for funding.
- The community college funding model must include a significant component that recognizes and rewards the community college role of integrator of educational offerings provided by a variety of sources.
- While the importance of the campus as the social and educational center of the college will remain for many students, much of the increase in enrollment will be from students who prefer to receive their instruction at home or at work and who come to the campus periodically for coaching and assessment. These operational changes will be reflected in the need for less new building construction but with the concomitant increase in the need for communication technology, computers, and space for individual and small group coaching and assessment sessions.